

Dear Members of Labor and Public Employees Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Meghan Dubois and I live in Torrington, Connecticut. I support S.B. 312: *An Act Concerning the Expansion of Connecticut Paid Sick Days*.

I consider myself fortunate to be employed by a nonprofit organization with fewer than 50 employees (we have only 6 employees), but still have access to incredibly generous paid sick time.

I am proud Connecticut became the first state to require certain employers to provide paid sick days back in 2011, but the law only applies to employers with 50+ employees in certain service occupations. The law does not cover employees of employers with fewer than 50 employees, federal employees, certain employees of manufacturers and nonprofit organizations, and temporary and day laborers.

Unlike many Connecticut workers, I never feel pressured to show up to work while sick or before I am fully recovered from an illness. But, that's what many Connecticut workers have to do under our current law in order to keep their jobs or to pay for groceries, rent, or other essentials. Under the existing law, covered workers are only eligible to use paid sick time they've accrued after they've worked 680 hours, which is inaccessible to part time workers or those with multiple jobs.

I do not have to worry about making time for doctor's appointments for myself or my child whenever needed. But, that's not reality for so many working parents. Workers without paid sick days are more than twice as likely to seek emergency room care for themselves, a child or a relative because they can't take time away from work during normal business hours to obtain routine care, which leads to higher health insurance costs and medical expenses.

I am grateful to have access to paid sick time not only for myself and my immediate family members, but also my extended family and chosen family. Under the current law, workers can only use paid sick time to care for a child up to the age of 18 or a spouse, defined as husband or wife. The law does not include time to care for extended or chosen families and leaves out workers who care for loved ones outside of the traditional "nuclear" family.

Workers should not have to be "lucky" like me to have access to paid sick time to care for themselves or their families. All Connecticut workers need and deserve paid sick days.

I strongly support S.B. 312. I urge the Committee and Connecticut lawmakers to vote favorably this year to strengthen Connecticut's paid sick leave law.

Thank you for your time,

Meghan Dubois
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